

State Historical Resources Commission

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-13

RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION

Cosmopolitan Hotel

WHEREAS, the Cosmopolitan Hotel is one of the oldest buildings in historic Old Town San Diego, begun as a single story adobe built between 1827 and 1829 as the family home of Juan Lorenzo Bandini, a San Diego pioneer, designed in the vernacular Spanish Colonial architectural style, and in 1869 developed as the Cosmopolitan Hotel under the ownership of Albert Seeley, operator of an early stagecoach line from San Diego to Los Angeles, who desired to create a place where travelers could have comfort, style, and entertainment, and built an L-shaped Greek Revival hotel with the addition of a wood-framed second floor on the adobe building, including a grand balcony that wrapped around the second story from which guests could watch the crowd and activities in the town square below; and

WHEREAS, in 1888 Seeley sold the hotel; in 1900 the building became a canning facility for an olive factory; the building fell into disrepair; in 1928 was taken over by a Bandini grandson, Cave J. Coutts, Jr., who returned the building to a hotel and restaurant remodeled in the Steamboat Revival style, and wired the building for electricity and gas; in 1945 James H. and Nora Cardwell purchased the property, renovated by their son Frank in the 1950s to an upscale tourist motel with a quasi-Spanish Colonial Revival exterior; in 1968 the Cardwells sold the property to the State of California and the original buildings in Old Town San Diego evolved into Old Town San Diego State Historic Park; and

WHEREAS, a three-year, multi-million dollar project completed in June 2010 included creative and unconventional rehabilitation and restoration treatments in response to the building's unusual construction and many layers of historic fabric; original plans were dramatically altered in response to discoveries during the historic investigation process; the removal of previous renovations revealed details including an original stairway, three- and four-foot-thick adobe walls, redwood clapboard siding, and fireplaces; and carefully selected antique furnishings and lighting reproductions replicate the hotel's nineteenth century ambiance;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that official recognition on behalf of the State Historical Resources Commission and the State Historic Preservation Officer is given to California State Parks San Diego Coast District for its staff and partners' skills, talent, and dedication in researching, rehabilitating, and documenting the Cosmopolitan Hotel as a tribute to and reflection of San Diego's evolution from a Mexican pueblo to an American frontier community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be recorded in the minutes of the State Historical Resources Commission and a suitable copy presented to California State Parks San Diego Coast District.

November 9, 2012

STATE HISTORICAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Bryan K. Brandes
Chairman

Carol Roland-Nawi, Ph.D.
Executive Secretary

